

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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National Conference on Cooperative Mission Policy.....	1
Nagy Refutes Kozaki's Statement on Soviet Union Visit.....	3
Unexpected Gift Welcomed.....	4

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COOPERATIVE MISSION POLICY

An attempt to study "cooperation" in relation to the Mission of the Christian Church in Japan was made at a National Conference on Cooperative Mission Policy held at Amagi Sanso, Japan, October 2-4, 1962. The theme for the Conference was "Cooperative Mission - Principles and Practice."

Attending the Conference were two hundred evangelistic workers, teachers, and social workers representing The United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan) and Christian schools and social work institutions related to it. Both Japanese and missionary workers were included in the meeting, which was sponsored by both the Council of Cooperation and the Evangelism Committee sponsored annual Cooperative Evangelism Conference.

Keynote speeches by the Rev. Takeshi Takasaki, Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, and the Rev. Howard Norman, district evangelistic missionary, Matsumoto, reviewed the varied and changing patterns of cooperation in mission in Japan and abroad. The Conference then divided into five groups, each composed of social workers, teachers, and evangelistic workers, to discuss problems of cooperation relative to the Christian mission in Japan.

In the discussions, five areas of special concern were pinpointed:

- 1) Evangelism in Japan and the problem of self-support;
- 2) Cooperation of Christian social institutions, Christian educational institutions, and The United Church of Christ in the evangelism of Japan;
- 3) The establishment of Councils of Cooperation on the Kyoku (regional) level to encourage the cooperation of the three groups;
- 4) Problems related to the missionary's assignment:
 - a) Job descriptions,
 - b) Initial orientation,
 - c) Follow-up and supervision,
 - d) Deepening of the sense of partnership between missionaries and their Japanese co-workers;
- 5) The making clear of the image of the missionary according to the present-day concept of the mission task of the Church.

In regard to the problem of evangelism and self-support, three positions were represented at the Conference. One is the position that financial independence should be achieved as quickly as possible. The second position holds that financial independence is the "ideal" but impractical at the present time in view of the evangelistic needs of Japan and the limited financial strength of the Church, which make financial cooperation desirable for the time being. The third position maintains that there is a form of financial cooperation which is itself ideal and not an interim unavoidability, and that it is this which the Church should define and carry out. The view of the majority seemed to be that though the principle of self-support may be true, the actual situation does not permit its immediate and full application.

The problem in Japan of cooperation between Christian social work, Christian schools, and the Church arises partially out of the fact that each group developed along separate lines after the emergence of The United Church in the early Forties, with a resulting lack of coordinated evangelistic effort. This Conference was the first consultation of teachers, social workers, and Church leaders on a national policy basis.

Social work and education representatives affirmed the need for closer cooperation with the Church, but most do not limit this to the Kyodan only. A social worker asked that the churches send them more Christian personnel as it was difficult to complete a Christian staff. However a pastor replied, "We send splendid personnel but when they arrive at the institution they are surprised by the lack of Christian emphasis." Dedication to a common task in Christian mission inclusive of education and social work was lifted up as the true key to cooperation among Christian co-workers.

Joint meeting of social workers, teachers, and evangelistic workers, along the lines of the Amagi Sanso Conference, were

requested on a regional basis to increase mutual understanding and work out practical methods of cooperation.

In regard to missionaries, the desirability of continued missionary cooperation was affirmed repeatedly. In the future, however, according to discussion groups, the Church in Japan should take the central responsibility for orientation and guidance of missionaries. There were also requests for specific description of the particular tasks for which the Church desire a missionary. Partially as a result of this Conference the Kyodan General Assembly (Oct. 23-26) is holding its first "Receiving Ceremony" on Oct. 26, followed by C.O.C. orientation, for all IBC missionaries who have arrived since Sept. 1960, as a step towards making the missionaries feel they are co-workers.

The need for a new understanding of the "image", i.e. the role and relationship of the missionary in a Church of theological maturity, organizational ability, and increasing financial independence was emphasized.

NAGY REFUTES KOZAKI'S STATEMENT ON SOVIET UNION VISIT

Mr. Ferenc Nagy, former Prime Minister of Hungary in Japan to attend the 8th meeting of the Asian Peoples' Anti-Communist League (or Tokyo Meeting of Free Asia as the meeting was renamed at the request of members of the Japan Socialist Party), questioned the opinion as revealed in a statement by Rev. Michio Kozaki after his recent visit to the Soviet Union. The statement was that "there has never been any serious conflict between Leninism and Christianity for the past 36 years..."

Mr. Nagy noted that this declaration of Rev. Kozaki reminded him of the speech made by Stalin at a state dinner given in honor of Mr. Nagy while he was still Prime Minister. According to the former head of Hungary, Stalin said, "There never has been any hostility between the Soviet Union and Hungary.... Our enemies charge that we endanger the security of small states around us. This is not true. If we did, we would go against the principles of our great Lenin and our own position.... We will now show to the whole world, by the relationship between the Soviet Union and Hungary that a true and friendly relationship is possible on an equal basis between a great power and a small nation."

The former Prime Minister then continued to list the subsequent actions of the Red Army in Hungary, i.e. the strengthening of the Communist Party, the wholesale theft of valuables remaining after the war, the humiliation of the people and the mass rapes. Mr. Nagy also wondered whether Rev. Kozaki was informed of the "imprisonment of our best church leaders.... the abolishment of all Catholic orders, the total communization of thousands of church schools...."

"I believe Rev. Kozaki," he said, "when he states, 'The church is firmly rooted among the people...' But stop there.

It is not true that, 'It carries on its work effectively today.'"

Rev. Kozaki has made three trips to the Soviet Union, this last trip being the result of an invitation from church leaders in the U.S.S.R. His first trip was in 1928 on return from the Jerusalem Conference and the second trip was in 1936 on his way to attend the S.S. Conference in Norway. Rev. Kozaki's comments on his most recent visit were printed widely in Christian publications and received some space in various English language publications in Japan, but received almost no notice in the vernacular secular press. Mr. Nagy's refutation appeared in the form of a letter to Readers in Council of the Oct. 8 issue of the Japan Times.

UNEXPECTED GIFT WELCOMED

The Preparatory Committee for the EACC Conference on Christian Witness in Asian Industrial Society, to be held in Kyoto from Oct. 24 to Nov. 1, 1963, was the recipient of an unexpected but most welcome monetary gift.

Meeting in late September at the Christian Academy House in Kyoto, a group of salary-men were informed of the coming Conference during their meeting, and they spontaneously took a collection among themselves to aid in preparation for the coming gathering.

Such a gift coming from a group of non-Christians should be a challenge to all to make of this coming event in a Japan a real gift of the Holy Spirit.

Japan is the most industrialized country in Asia, other countries are looking to Japan for industrial know-how, but the Churches of Asia are looking to the Church in Japan for help in making the Christian Witness a vital one in the growing Industrial Societies of their lands.

Representatives of the National Christian Council, the Anglican Church in Japan and the United Church of Christ in Japan are on the Preparatory Committee.

